St. Christopher's Church

GLADWYNE, PENNSYLVANIA

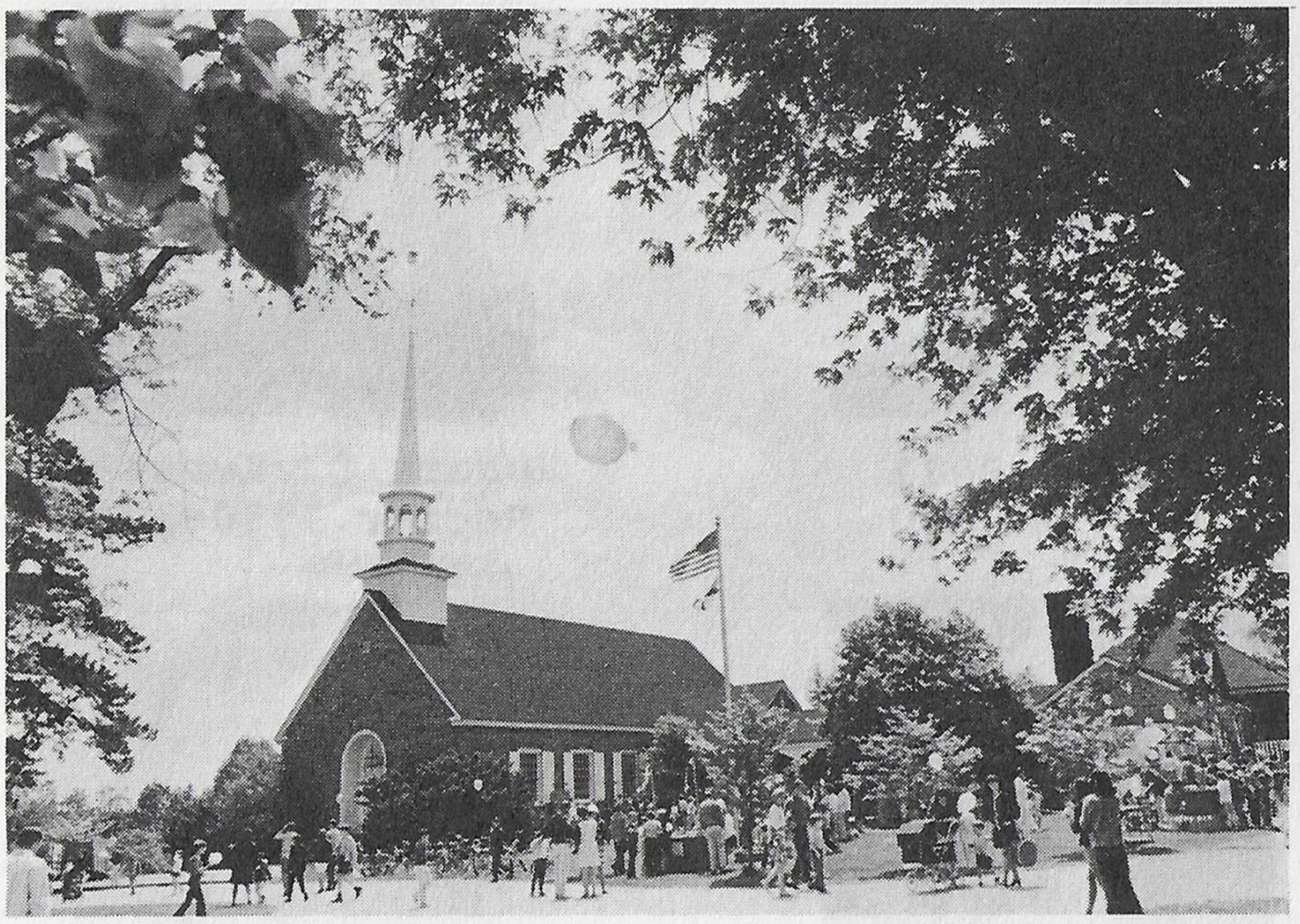
Parish History

25TH ANNIVERSARY • 1950—1975

Saint Christopher's Church

Memorial to David Goodbread and Elizabeth L. Goodbread, His Wife

1950 - 1975



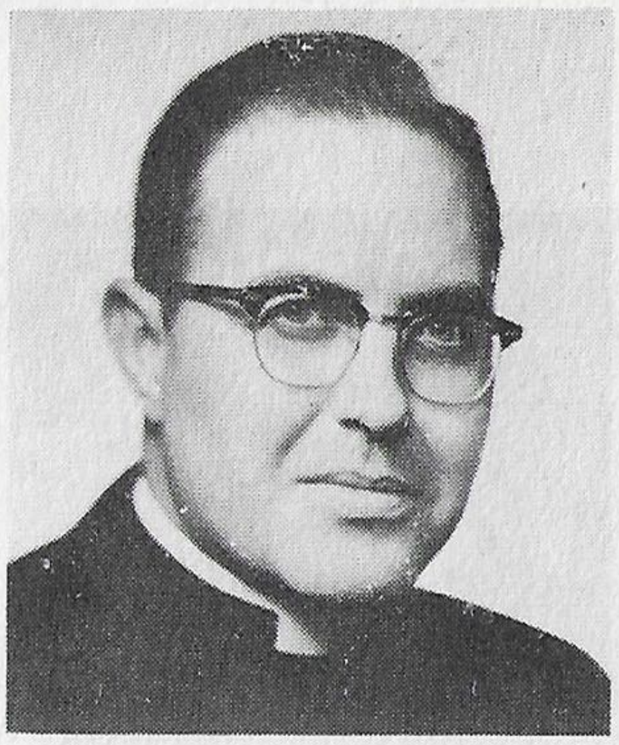
On December 24, 1975, St. Christopher's will mark its 25th anniversary as a worshipping community. What we will be remembering and celebrating then will be the story of the people of St. Christopher's through those twenty-five years, those many people of God who have worshipped and worked for Him here, and who continue to do so. We will be thinking of the joyous occasions and the sad ones we have shared together, of our hopes and fears, fulfillments and heartaches, under the leadership of our three rectors. Each parishioner has had a part in this story, large or small, and even though not mentioned here by name has been an important part of the parish program and life.

During these twenty-five years 517 persons have been baptized at St. Christopher's. The first shortly after the church had been consecrated, was Mickey Shumway, now serving as our capable Treasurer and Vestry member. There have been 692 confirmations, 212 marriages and 153 funeral services. In our churchyard are 100 graves of our families and friends.

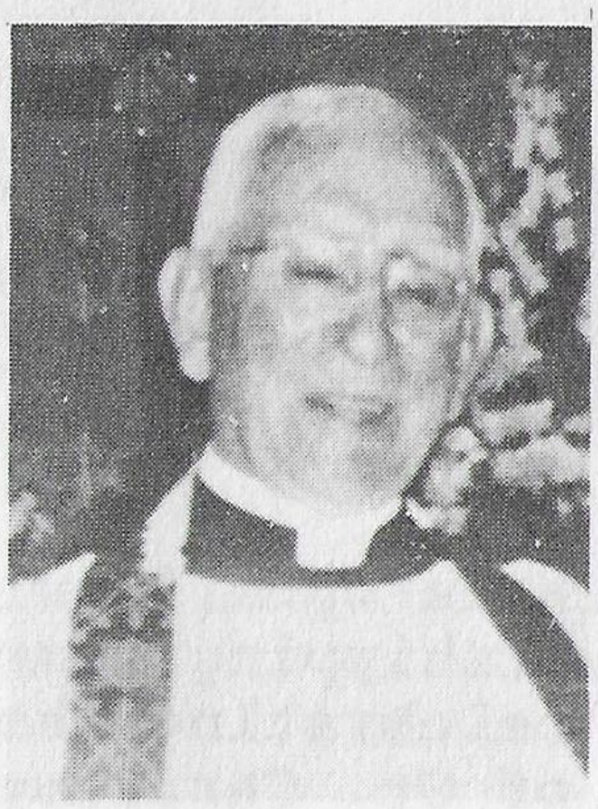
Spiritual Leaders of St. Christopher's Church

1950 - 1975

Gibson Bell
- 1950

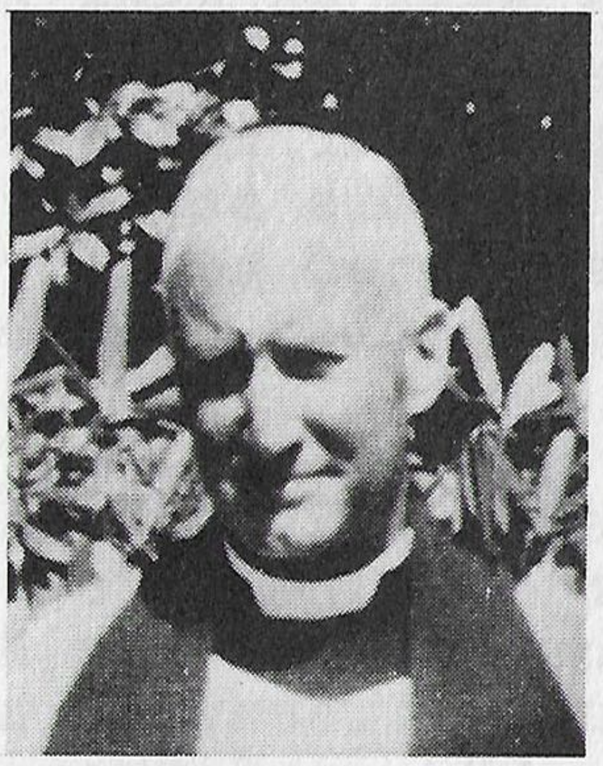


Robert Q. Kennaugh
Rector 1950-1955

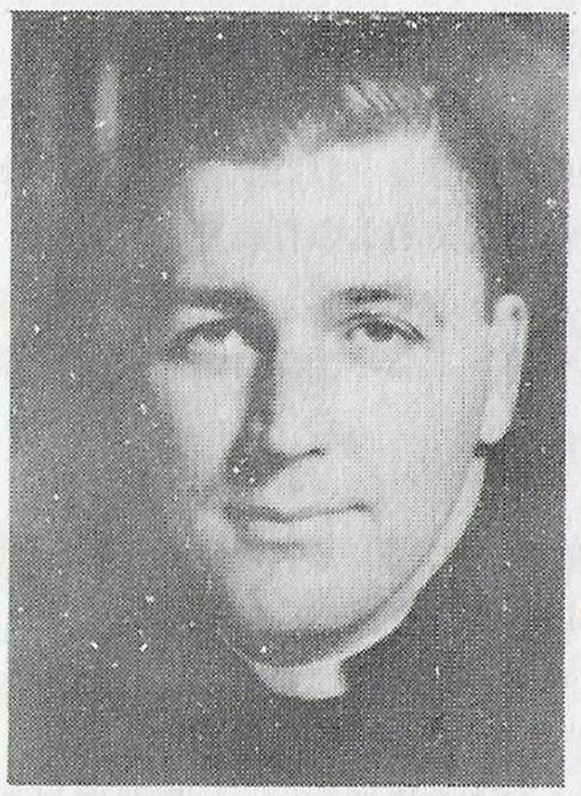


Stanley R. West
1955-1956, 1964

Halsey DeWolf Howe
Rector 1956-1964



Michael Martin
1964

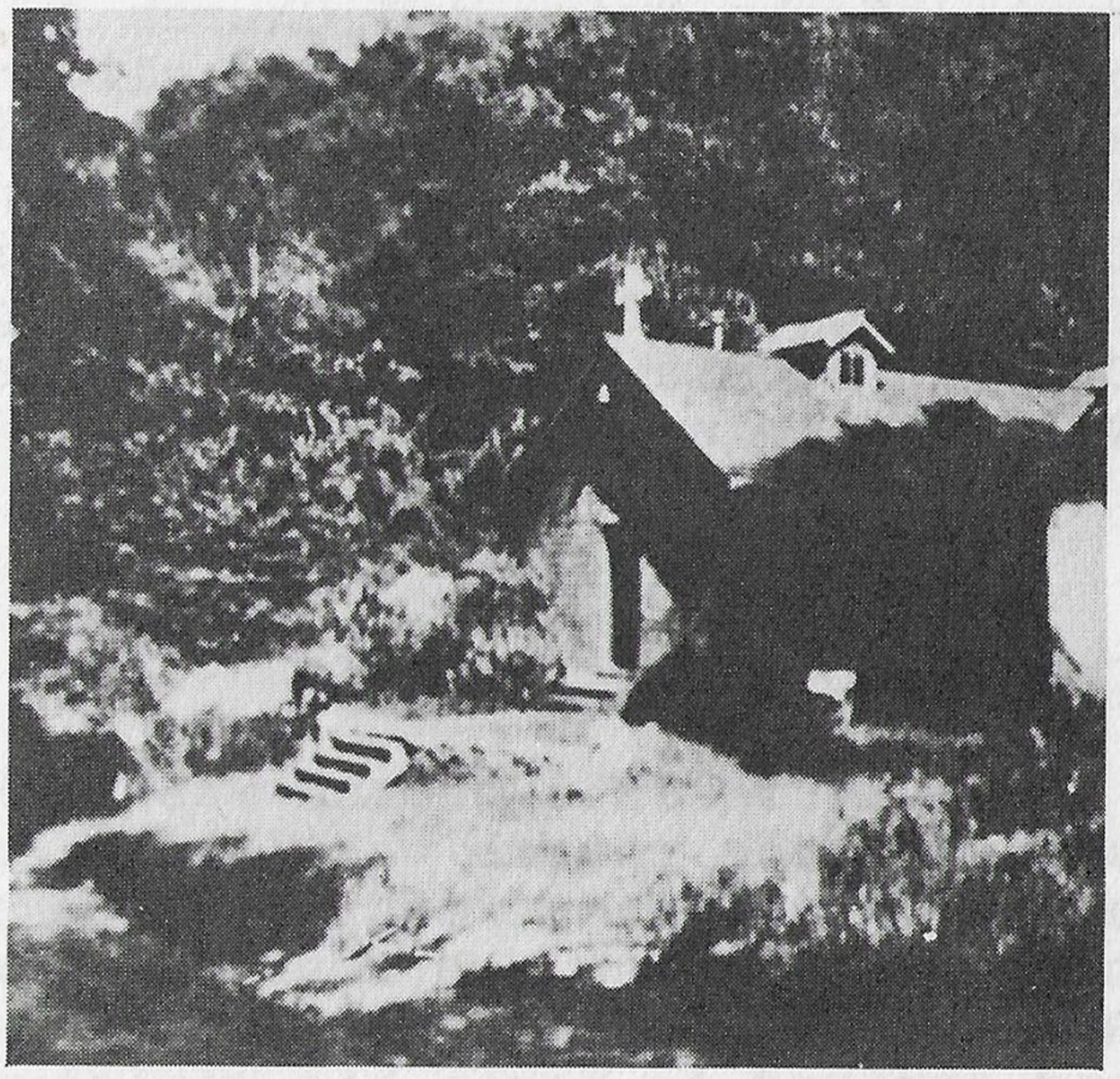


Warren H. Davis, Jr.
Rector 1965-

The Little Mission Chapel of St. Joseph's

The Episcopal Church had been caring for the needs of the people of this area for many years before St. Christopher's was built. In 1911, under the leadership of the Church of the Redeemer, Bryn Mawr, the little mission chapel of St. Joseph's was built on Mill Creek for the workers of the mills and those living up the hill in the village of Merion Square, Gladwyne's original name. The responsibility for the mission was passed on after awhile to St. Mary's Church, Ardmore, and finally, in 1930, to All Saint's Church, Wynnewood. For twenty years the Rev. Gibson Bell held services on Sundays at St. Joseph's, in addition to shouldering the responsibilities of the All Saints parish and of the Montgomery School, the successful boys' school he had founded and of which he continued as Headmaster.

During the depression, the Community Hall was built by the Diocese of Pennsylvania, and Dr. Bell's brother and sister-in-law, Stewart and Maud Bell, were established there to be of service to the people of Gladwyne. Maud Bell founded the Gladwyne Library. During the 2nd World War, services and Sunday School were held in the Community Hall because of the shortage of gasoline to go as far as the Chapel. Stewart Bell accompanied the hymn singing, pumping a wheezy little organ.



St. Joseph's Mission
Mill Creek
Gladwyne
(succeeded by St.
Christopher's
Church)

There was a nucleus of very faithful parishioners of St. Joseph's Mission, but the Gladwyne area was growing fast in 1949. Many new homes were being built and occupied by predominantly young families. Dr. Bell felt that Gladwyne had reached a size that could support a parish church if it had a church building. When he knew of the Goodbread legacy "to build an Episcopal Church on the Main Line", he told Wan Balis of the possibility of acquiring this legacy for Gladwyne, and suggested that he, Jack Dorrance and Walter Lippincott form a committee to explore this idea. Wan accepted the challenge, met with Bishop Hart, secured his approval and blessing on the venture, and formed a committee with Jack Dorrance as chairman. At a meeting held April 19, 1949, with Bishop Hart, Dean Shriener of the Church Farm School, Dean of the Convocation of Chester, and Dr. Bell attending, this committee was able to report having canvassed the area and finding ninety families interested in working for a church. They made known that a site, containing a stone stable which could be converted into a parish house, had been chosen, for which an offer of $12,000 had been made, and that $160,000 under the legacy of the Goodbread estate was available. The architectural firm of Kneedler, Mirick and Zantzinger would design a Pennsylvania field stone colonial church whose name - suggested by Wan Balis and approved by the committee - would be St. Christopher's.

Soon after this meeting, St. Christopher's was incorporated as a parish of the Diocese of Pennsylvania of the Episcopal Church in the U.S.A., a branch of the world-wide Anglican Communion, and elected its first vestry. The first vestry men were: Jack Dorrance, senior warden; Wan Balis, Blake Chandlee, Bill Coleman, Bill Elliott, Rowland Evans, Frank Powell, Bob Shertz, Jack Spahr, George Black, Charley Bromley, Fred Grauer, Stewart Miller and Walter Lippincott.

Cornerstone Laid in 1950

Early in 1950 ground was broken and the cornerstone of the church was laid, included in which was a St. Christopher medal that Carrie Powell had helped to choose. A churchyard was planned. The Rev. Robert Q. Kennaugh, of Texas, was elected Rector and arrived to begin his ministry before the church building was completed.

By Christmas Eve 1950, our lovely St. Christopher's was ready for celebration. Lib Powell, first Altar Guild President, and her helpers beautified it for worship. With our dear Oscar Eiermann at the organ, and four professional choir singers, including Lee Hendershott, who was to serve for many years, we praised the Lord and gave thanks.

Bob Kennaugh was a promoter and an organizer. He thought in big Texas ways and very early in St. Christopher's history established opportunities for worship, learning and fellowship for all. The Acolyte Guild was formed and boys and girls choirs started. A church school was begun with Maud Bell as Director of Christian Education, and George Black as Superintendent. There were teacher training classes. Seminarians were engaged to conduct the children's services and youth groups, and endeared themselves to all. Children came to St. Christopher's on Saturday mornings for catachetical classes, films, games and popcorn, under the direction of John and Dede Shumway. There were also Inquirers' classes for adults and youth. A Men's Club and a Women's Auxiliary were organized, and in May 1951 the women held the first Azalea Day, so named by Julia Pilling. Breakfasts were served after early service, and the youth held Sunday night suppers. The custom of Shrove Tuesday pancake suppers was begun that first year and many preparations and extra services were added for Lent, such as early morning Communions and daily Evening Prayer.

On September 27, 1951 a wonderful consecration service took place with the Bishop of the Diocese, the Dean of the Convocation of Chester, and Dr. Bell participating. A real Texas barbecue was held prior to the service, to which the whole community was invited. The members of the Men's Club had taken shifts through the night to keep meats turning on the outdoor spits. This barbecue became an annual institution and was famous in the neighborhood. Another event that all looked forward to was the burning of all Christmas trees at Epiphany, with the Gladwyne Fire Company standing by in case the fire should spread.

Bob Kennaugh's warm, western friendliness enlisted great cooperation between him and his congregation. A relaxed relationship, on a first-name basis, existed then - and has ever since - at St. Christopher's. As Gladwyne grew, it grew to-

Workshop workers standing behind Christmas Bazaar table

ward St. Christopher's. The church activities became a whole way of life for its parishioners. By the time Bob left in the fall of 1955, to accept a call on the West Coast, there were 400 communicants on the role of the parish.

Early Members Continue to be Active

In spite of the kinetic quality of the Gladwyne community, about one quarter of these original 400 continue to be active, contributing members of St. Christopher's. Some parishioners grew up in the church and are assuming responsibilities and leadership. Dan Bradley has served as acolyte at a record 600 services! The Line family has contributed five acolyte sons. Jeffie Abbott, John Gwinn, Bill Lukens, Clem Page, Carolyn Welde and Eleanor York now bring their own children to the Church School. Christy Roach has added to the music program of the church. John Powell is our new assistant organist and choir director and is making singing church music an exciting experience for our young people.

Carrie Powell is John's grandmother. Her late husband Frank was one of our first vestrymen, and her son Jack, John's father, has been a Junior Warden. Lib Powell, Nan Thornton, Frances Graham and Anabel Horrocks have spent innumerable volunteer hours in the church office helping to get out weekly mailings.

Thirty of the present original St. Christopher's members have served on the vestry, including three sets of husbands and wives - Ada and Tom Keefer, Ann and Dick Knight, and Emilie and Phelps Riley - and a father and daughter - Mickey and John Shumway. The others are: Wan Balis, Connie Barker, Harvey Buek, Blake Chandlee, Henry Cornman, Sam Cox, Sam Cresson, Jack Dorrance, Rowland Evans, Ed Foltz, Dick Freemann, Jim Gardiner, Dan Greenwood, Jack Huber, Stew Miller, Clem Page, Jack Spahr, Charles Strickler, Eleanor Townsend and Cliff Walton.

The rest of the loyal, helpful "old timers" are: Dottie Attig, the John Arthur family, the Graham Baurles, Ruth and Schuyler English, Jerry Fox, Anne Firestone, Ginnie Gummey, the Dave Gwinns, Connie Grant, the Joe Grubbs, K. Gaty, Elsie and Gene Graves, Betty Lawson, Viola Lindsay, Janet MacFarlan, Fran Muller, Peg Roach, the Edgar Reads, the Bob Shattucks, the Howard Taylors, Louise and Lew Tabor, Eleanor Thomas, the Joe Vetterliens, the Wateralls, Jane Watson, the Bill Wells and the John Williams.

The Rev. Halsey Howe, Second Rector

Our good friend the Rev. Stanley West, D. D., Rector Emeritus of Calvary Church, Conshohocken, ably took charge of St. Christopher's until the Rev. Halsey deWolf Howe became our second rector at a service of institution on September 30, 1956. Halsey had received his theological education at

Oscar Eiermann,
Organist and
Choirmaster
since 1950

Groundbreaking for new Parish House, Halsey DeW. Howe, Rector

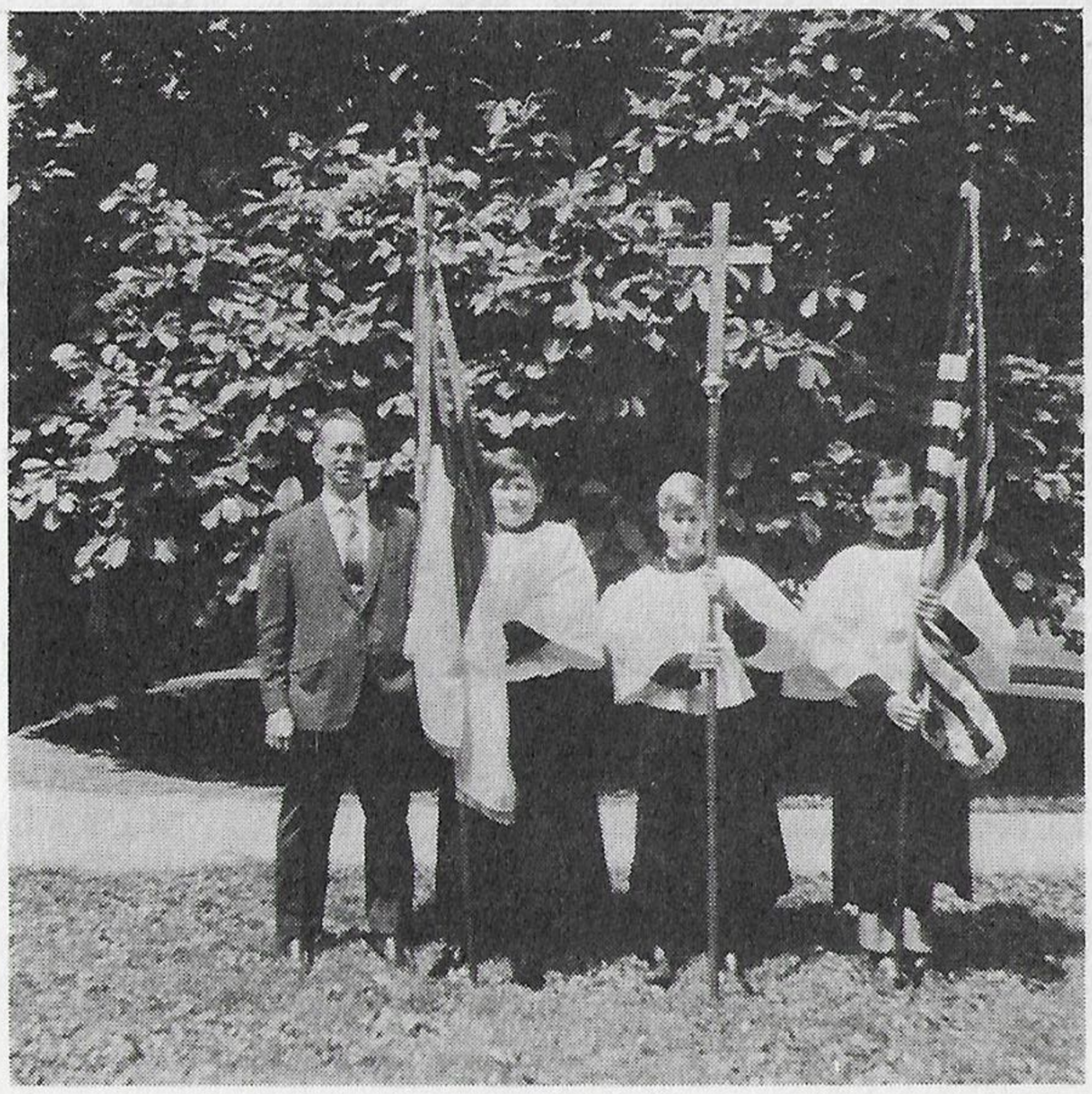
the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, Mass. He and Carol came to us from Hamilton, Massachusetts with a rich clerical and professional background. An immediate concern was to build a rectory for them and their four children. After a year the new rectory was ready for occupancy, and was also spacious enough to accommodate Mark, Deborah, and Priscilla, who were born while Halsey and Carol were here.

A major concern for Halsey was the Christian Education of the large number of children in our parish, in this still growing community consisting largely of young families. He had made a special trip to Gladwyne from Massachusetts during the summer to attend a planning meeting of the Christian Education Committee. At the time of Halsey's arrival, the Church School was divided into two sessions, the older grades meeting at 9:15 a.m., the younger ones at 11:00 a.m. Every available space in the old parish house was used twice on Sunday mornings. I remember trying to keep twenty to thirty three-year-olds happy in the little basement room.

Plans for a new parish house were discussed as early as 1959. The same architects who built the church were engaged to draw up plans for a building that would fit into the landscape without taking away from the prominence of the Church. Mr. Tucker, a professional fund-raiser, was employed to manage the campaign and under the capable leadership of Herschel Cudd, Jack Dorrance, Jack Huber and Ray

Welsh, $250,000 in pledges was raised, to be paid over a three-year period. The groundbreaking ceremony took place in October of 1962 with some of the Church School children taking part, and the Main Line Pipe Band playing. The skirling of the pipes and drums was often heard around St. Christopher's in those days as Hughie Stewart had permission to hold his band practices in the parish house. Halsey enjoyed the band and would wear a kilt and act as its Pipe Major when needed. He was also on the scene of all Gladwyne fires wearing his fireman's hat and directing traffic.

By 1960 the decision was made to add a Director of Christian Education to the parish staff. Since the departure of Maud Bell, at the same time Bob Kennaugh left, several lay women had filled this position, including Dottie Greenwood, but were finding the burden too heavy. The enrollment of the school, at this time, consisted of 305 children, 14 senior high students, and 20 adults. Helen McHenry had the qualifications we needed and agreed to come to us from a parish in Charleston, West Virginia. Helen had grown up in Germantown, the daughter of a parish clergyman, and was the first woman to be graduated from the Philadelphia Divinity School. Under her direction the Church School ran very smoothly - though we were still crowded - and that summer she instituted a successful Vacation Bible School with the other churches of the community.



John Shumway,
Acolyte Dad,
with Acolytes

The New Parish House

At last, in September of 1963, the Church School classes could stretch out in their new building and all meet at the same time. An elaborate service, followed by a reception, marked the occasion. Six clergy took part as did the boys and girls choirs and the Pipe Band. The women of St. Christopher's, under the guidance of Emilie Riley, contributed much of the furnishings of the library room and the drapes in the class rooms. Evelyn McCoy became our first librarian. With space now available, Nancy Cornman and Carol Howe led the organizing of our Day School for three and four-year-old children.

Halsey's Wednesday morning Bible Classes became an institution of these years, as did the Thursday evening family Lenten suppers, followed by programs. Many of the original activities such as Azalea Day and the workshop for the Christmas Bazaar, have continued from the early years.

In the spring of 1964, Halsey Howe shocked us by announcing his resignation to accept a call to St. Martin's, Providence, Rhode Island, to go back to"where his roots were", as he put it. In June, we regretfully bid farewell to the nine Howes.

Once again Dr. West cared for us lovingly while we were without a rector, with the help of the Rev. Michael Martin, Headmaster of Montgomery School, who had become a dear friend while in charge of summer vacation month services. Helen McHenry, always available and eager to do what was needed, was helpful in giving information on possible candidates for Rector for St. Christopher's.

This time we would seek a rector from within the Diocese of Pennsylvania, a man of warmth and spiritual strength and leadership, who would understand and love our own area and would take responsibilities beyond the parish, as well as in it.

The Rev. Warren Davis, Third Rector

During that summer of 1964, Joe Colen, Senior Warden, and his committee, visited local churches until they found what they were searching for at St. Peter's Church, Germantown, in the person of the Rev. Warren H. Davis, Jr. After his unanimous

election by the Vestry, he agreed to accept a call to St. Christopher's, and became our third rector on January 1st, 1965.

Warren had been born and spent all his life in Philadelphia, acquiring his education at Germantown Friends' School, the University of Pennsylvania, and the Philadelphia Divinity School. His former ministry had been at the Seamen's Church Institute and the Germantown Parish. Since coming to St. Christopher's he has not only cared for the spiritual needs of our own parishioners, but has had the honor of being elected Dean of the Merion Deanery of which we are one of twelve parishes, and President of our local Junior High School Home and School Association. He has served as Director of Denbigh Day Camp and on numerous diocesan and township steering committees, as well as ministering to the inmates of Graterford Prison on a regular basis. Locally, he has formed close ties with the other Gladwyne churches to combine many activities. Creatively, Warren wrote and hosted a T.V. interview series on the aggressions of man, which was produced in the fall of 1972.

The late nineteen sixties and early seventies have been turbulent years in the world, our country, the church in general, and our diocese in particular. Controversies raged over methods to achieve civil rights, the justice of our involvement in the Vietnam War, and the trustworthiness of our institutions and elected officials. The young were rebelling against the hypocrisy of established ways, and all authority; minorities - even women - were protesting against discriminations, and all values were being tested. To make matters more confusing, the new Bishop of Pennsylvania had a broader view of Christian ministry than his predecessors, and felt he was the shepherd of <u>all</u> Philadelphians and should be actively involved in righting injustices; theologians were re-evaluating religious concepts; all churches were working towards merging; and Convention asked that we try other forms of liturgy than the old, loved Book of Common Prayer. All of this was disturbing to the people of St. Christopher's. Many yearned for the security of old, familiar ways. Others were impatient with the slow pace of change and progress. Warren handled us with patience and understanding, and, loyal to his Bishop's and National Church's leading, helped us to progressive change. We experimented with Trial Liturgies, and added Lay Readers to most services. We lowered the voting age requirement for our parish elections. At

Annual meeting in the new Parish House

the gentle prodding of Ed Rosenow, then Nominating Committee Chairman, we nominated and elected our first vestry-woman, Ada Keefer, in 1967. Nine women now have served, or are at present serving on the Vestry.

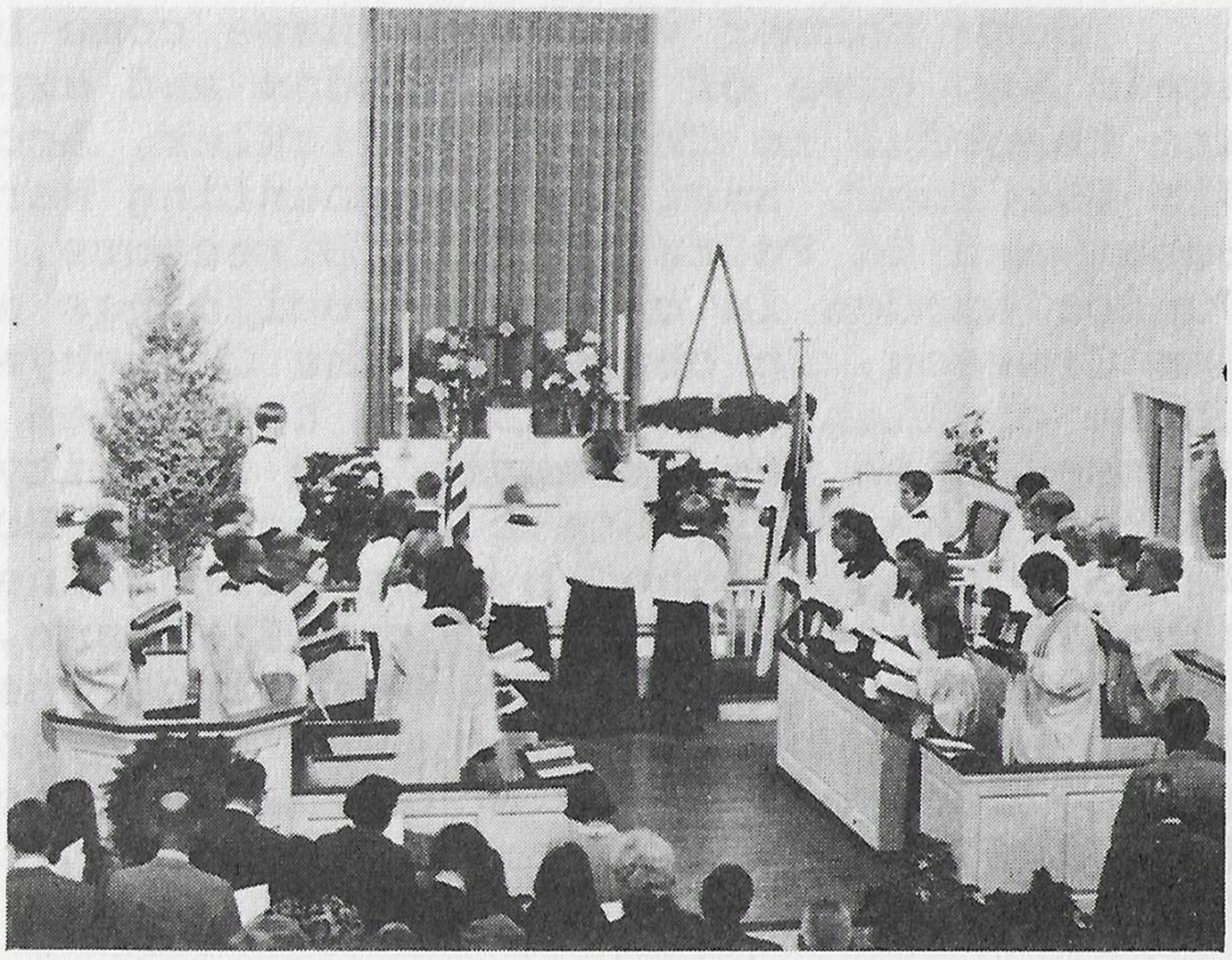
Greater Laity Involvement

These challenging times stimulated much study and soul searching into the purpose of the parish, and in all areas of our church's life, increased the involvement of the laity. Volunteers, under the enthusiastic leadership of Art Hughes and George Rogalsky, now lead the congregation's singing, instead of a paid choir. It was Art's vision, love of music, and hard work, with the continuing leadership of Ed Lewis and Henry Bromley, that made it possible for many to make memorial contributions, amounting to more than $50,000, so that we will be able to start off our next quarter century singing a "new song unto the Lord" on a real pipe organ. Two of our laymen, Steve Gardner and Bob VanBrott, were licensed by the Bishop to serve the chalice at large Eucharist services. A Worship Committee was formed, with Bob VanBrott, and more recently Don Carlson, as chairman, to help make worship policies. Many lay persons, under the leadership of Ginnie Albrecht, Jack Pittenger and Dick Schneider spent time and energy in their concern to find solutions to the problem of dwindling Church School

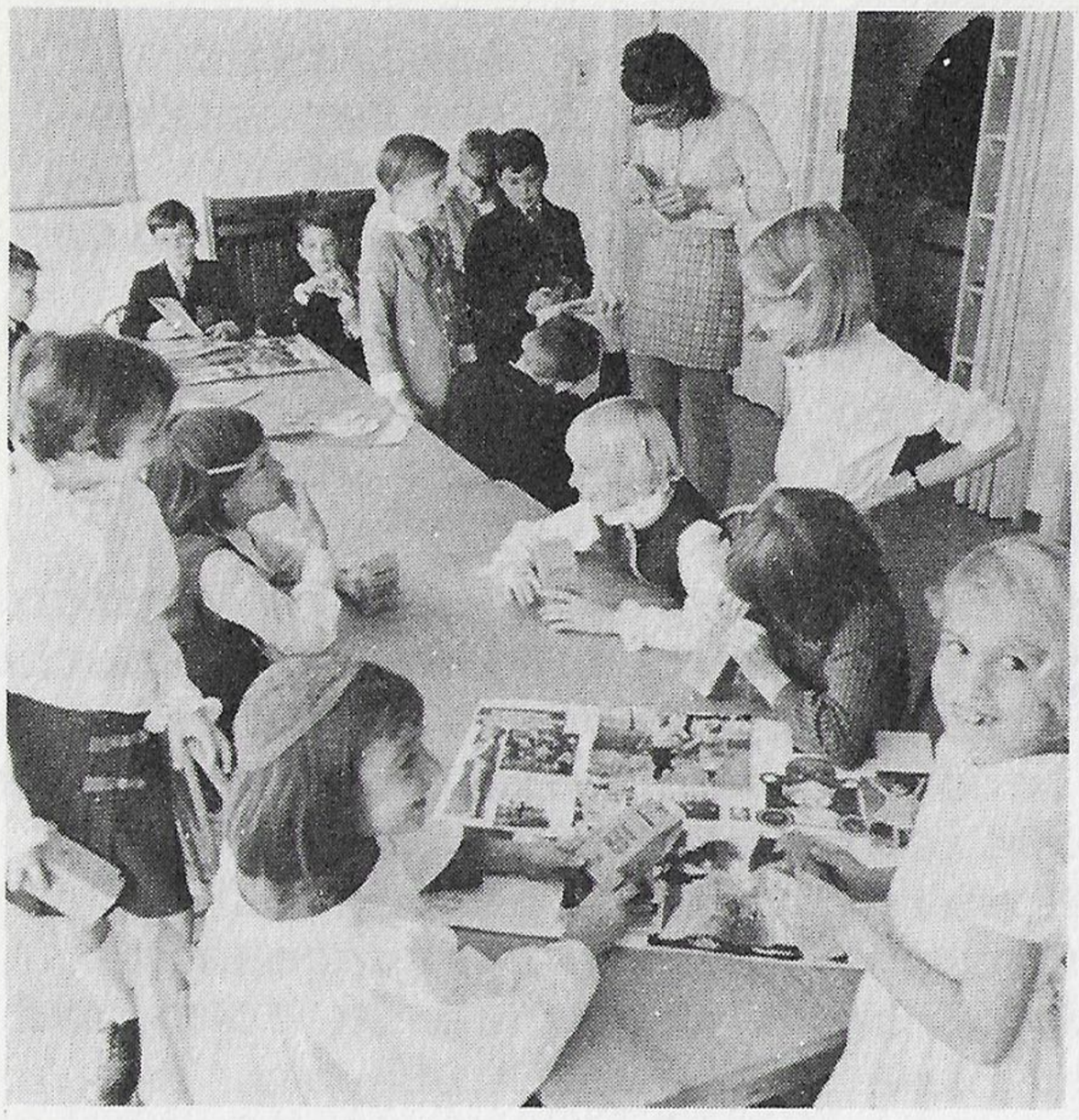
attendance. It was felt that a young Assistant Rector, in charge of education, would better serve the church, at this time, than a Director of Christian Education, as he could handle both assignments. And so after Helen McHenry left us for a position at St. Thomas' Church in Whitemarsh, the Rev. J. Michael Jupin came to St. Christopher's from Winchester, Massachusetts and assumed his duties in the summer of 1969.

Mike's youthful enthusiasm spread to his Church School teachers as they experimented with a new method of teaching called the Discovery Program. In this program, students were grouped according to interests, rather than age, and Biblical teaching was through activities. Mike and Howard Friend, pastor of Gladwyne Presbyterian Church, were very successful in attracting the youth of both churches in combined programs. In the short time Mike was with us, he stretched our minds with his growing spiritual insights. Though he disturbed some parishioners with his controversial ideas, he charmed most of us, and we were sorry to have him leave us late in 1971, to head the Main Line Peace Center.

The parents of the parish have now taken on the responsibilities of the Church School for their children. With Warren's help and guidance they are teaching by way of the "Joy" series, a joyful and imaginative set of lessons for making Bible learning relevant to each age. The attendance and enthusiasm of parents and children is growing weekly for this family worship service and learning hour, and the



Christmas Eve, Warren Davis, Rector, and Michael Jupin, Assistant Rector



Sunday School class, Susie Wilmerding, teacher

revived junior choir, so beautifully trained by our new assistant organist and choirmaster, John Powell, makes the monthly Eucharist particularly colorful and joyful.

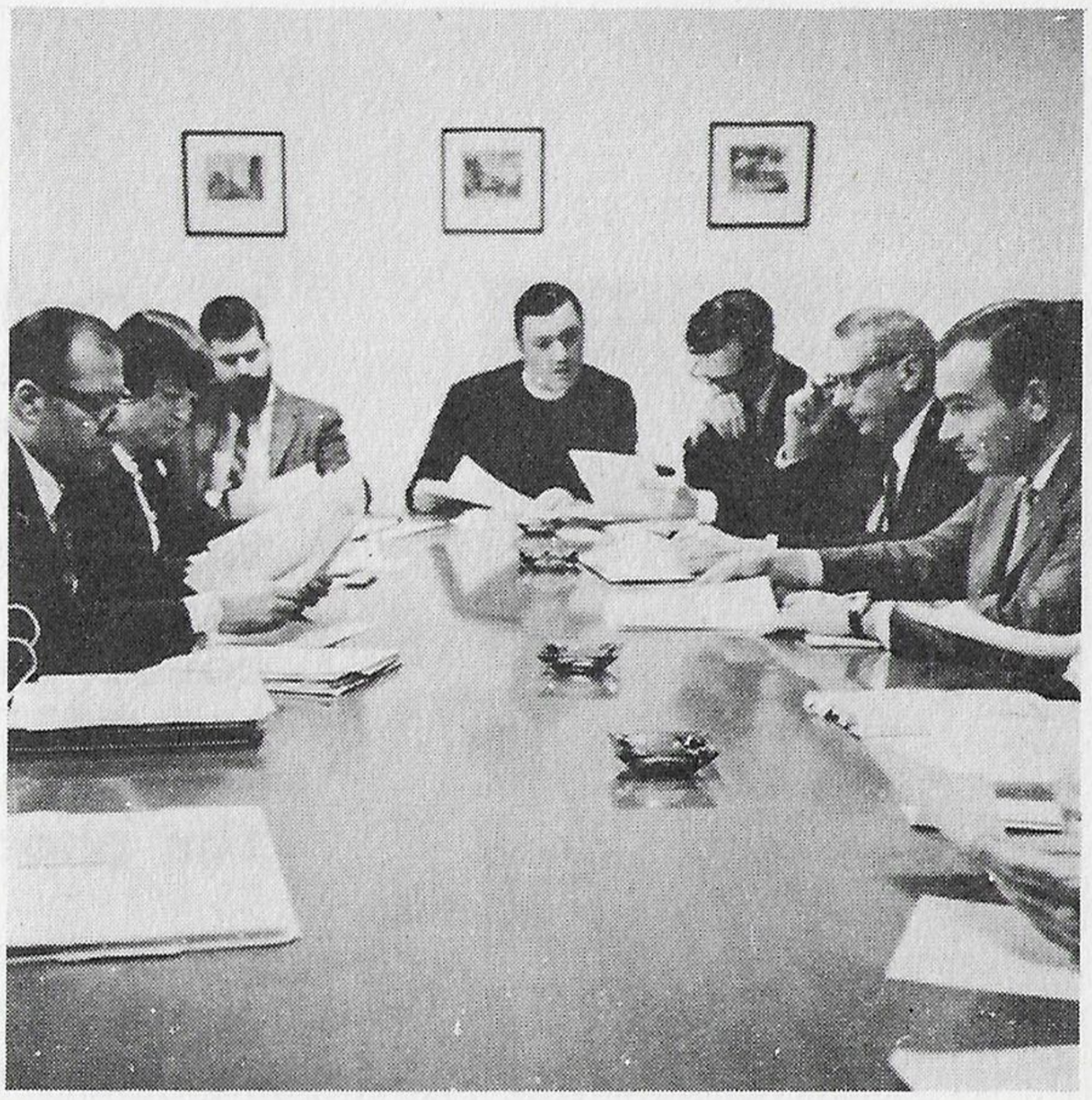
All the Gladwyne churches have discovered a need for each others' strengths and been drawn together in joint programs of worship, education and fellowship. We have joined Gladwyne Presbyterian Church in combined church school teachers' Bible study and confirmation classes.

The Vestry and Staff

Some former vestrymen have come back to serve again and give of their wisdom and experience. We are thankful to Charles Strickler, Accounting Warden, Jim Gardiner, assistant accounting Warden, Jack Huber and Ed Foltz, Budget Directors, Tom Keefer, Junior Warden in charge of buildings and grounds and Sam Cresson, in charge of the Churchyard. Through these challenging years, we have been particularly blessed with the strength and sagacity of our Rector's Wardens, Steve Gardner and Bob Kendall. We have been soothed by the faithfulness and continuity of our staff: Oscar Eiermann, who has been our organist and choirmaster since the founding of the church; Howard Hayes, who has been our sexton since 1964; and Sally Schaffhauser, our secretary from 1967 to 1974. Sandy Wynn came to us as parish secretary in the fall of 1974.

Now our worship attendance and annual giving are growing again. We do our part in supporting the work of our Diocese, and in reaching out in help to other needy ventures. Our traditional activities continue strong. Last year's Azalea Day, from which the whole church now benefits, was more successful than ever before. The faithful workshop group continues working all through the year to give Christmas shoppers ever more attractive hand-made goodies. The women gather for popular activities four times during the season. A new innovation has been the Agape Coffee Hour, following the 11 o'clock service, the brainchild of Liz and Stew Miller. Our parish house is in continuous demand for an assortment of groups, and even became the home, for a few days, of our River Road neighbors during the flood from storm "Agnes".

In closing, let us give special tribute to some who have so faithfully shouldered the responsibility of seeing that things were done "decently and in order" these twenty-five years. Our thanks to John Shumway, who almost single-handedly, and ever since the beginning, has seen to it that every service is tended by acolytes; to the Altar Guild Presidents: Lib Powell, Katrina Jenkins, Mary Cornman and now Bunny Mulberger, who have made certain the chancel was beautifully prepared for every service; to the Rector's Wardens: Jack Dorrance, Charlie Bromley, Bill Spofford, Bob Shertz, Joe Colen, Steve Gardner and Bob Kendall, who have borne the heaviest responsibility for the functioning of the church. The

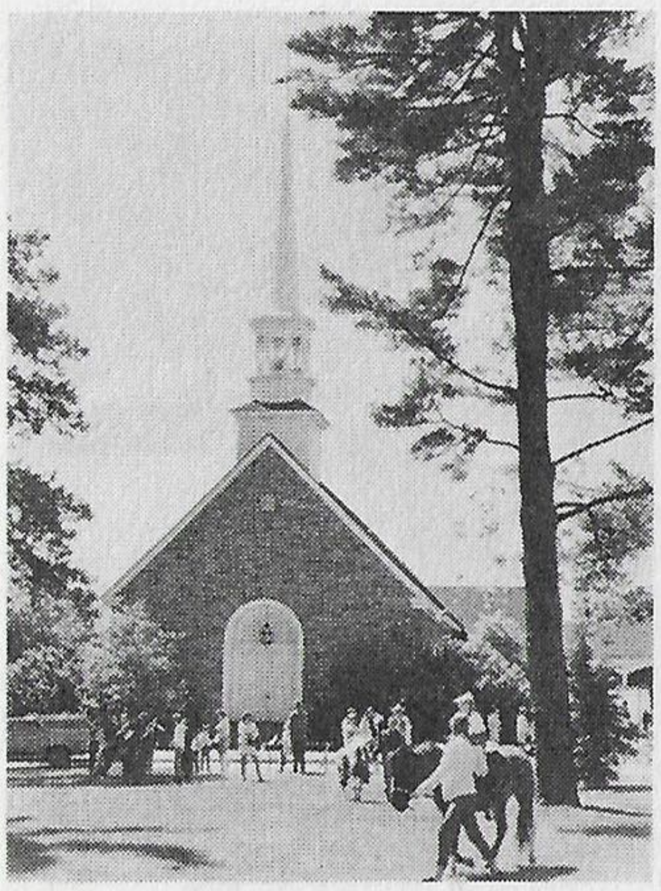


Vestry meeting in parish library

Shertz family have been greatly missed, since they moved from the area a short while ago, as they had been involved in all aspects of the Church's life since its founding. We also gratefully remember our staff members through the years: Oscar Eiermann, our always organist and choir director but now fortunately receiving help from John Powell; our secretaries: Cecile Doehler, Gussie Zimmerman, Edna Pittenger, Mae Manuel, Carol Underwood, Sally Schaffhauser, and now Sandy Wynn; and our sextons: Albert Wolf, Fred Gommel, Bill Millar and Howard Hayes.

We move into the years ahead, thankful for the past and hopeful for the future - thankful not only for the legacy of our beautiful church buildings, but for the legacy of the many persons who have given so much during these twenty-five years - and hopeful for the future of St. Christopher's because of the growing, dedicated leadership, both clerical and lay, which we have now.

Eleanor C. Townsend
January, 1975



St. Christopher's Church expresses its special appreciation to Eleanor Townsend for writing this history; to Peggy and Bob Bach for the cover design and layout; and to Lib Powell, Bill Holland, and Dave Irving for photographs.

This photograph and that on page one were taken on Azalea Day.